

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

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R 130235Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1257

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

CINCPACREP CANBERRA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, AS

SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM'S FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH

TO ALP CONFERENCE; RESOLUTION TO RECOGNIZE PRG

DEFEATED

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: IN OPENING DEBATE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AT ALP CONFERENCE JULY 12, PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM SAID HE CONSIDERED ANZUS ALLIANCE IMPORTANT, BUT SAID THAT ANZUS WAS NOT THE ONLY FACTOR IN AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS WITH U.S. AND THAT RELATIONS WITH U.S. WERE NOT THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS AS A WHOLE. RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR AUSTRALIAN RECOGNITION OF BOTH PRG AND GVN IN SOUTH VIET-NAM AND FOR RECOGNITION OF PRG AS SOLE GOVERNMENT WERE DEFEATED BY LARGE MAJORITIES. END SUMMARY.

2. POLICY SPEECH- IN SPEECH TO ALP FEDERAL CONFERENCE JULY 12, OPENING DEBATE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE PLANK OF PARTY PLATFORM, PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM CHARACTERIZED LABOR POLICY AS MOVING AWAY FROM VIEW
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THAT QTE OUR RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES ARE THE

ONLY SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN AUSTRALIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS.
END QTE.

3. WHITLAM CONTINUED THAT PREVIOUS LIBERAL-COUNTRY GOVERNMENT QTE WENT ALONG WITH BRITAIN'S OLD COMMERCIAL PREOCCUPATION IN THE STRAITS (I.E., STRAITS OF MALACCA) AND THE UNITED STATES' IDEOLOGICAL PREOCCUPATION IN INDO-CHINA....THE FACT IS THAT ANZUS IS A DEFENSIVE TREATY, REQUIRING ITS THREE PARTNERS--NEW ZEALAND IS ONE OF THE PARTNERS, TOO-- TO CONSULT ACCORDING TO THEIR CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES IN THE EVENT OF ONE OR MORE OF THE PARTNERS COMING UNDER THREAT. OF COURSE , IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT, THIS INVOLVES CONGRESS AS WELL AS THE PRESIDENT. WE WANT TO MOVE AWAY FROM THE NARROW VIEW THAT ANZUS IS THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN OUR RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. END QTE.

4. WHITLAM SAID THAT HE BELIEVED ANZUS WAS IMPORTANT BUT WAS ONLY ONE ASPECT OF THE VERY WIDE RANGE OF INTERESTS AND OBLIGATIONS LINKING AUSTRALIA WITH THE U.S. HE WENT ON TO WARN ALP CONFERENCE THAT NEGATIVE OBSESSION SOME MEMBERS OF ALP HAD ABOUT AMERICAN ALLIANCE WAS AS COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE AS THE FORMER LIBERAL-COUNTRY GOVERNMENT'S PREOCCUPATION WITH FORCING EVERY ISSUE INTO FRAMEWORK OF THE ALLIANCE. WHITLAM STRONGLY DEFENDED HIS GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS FIELD, SAYING QTE I VENTURE TO SAY THAT IN NO AREA OF POLICY HAVE WE BEEN ABLE TO CARRY OUT BOTH THE MANDATE AND THE PLATFORM MORE FAITHFULLY, OR SO FULLY. END QTE.

5. RECOGNITION OF THE PRG- AMENDMENT TO PLATFORM PROPOSING RECOGNITION OF PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIET-NAM WAS PROPOSED BY SOCIALIST LEFT AND ITS ALLIES IN TWO VERSIONS. WHITLAM MOVED TO DEISCHARGE (REJECT) MOTIONS. SENATOR WHEELDON, WHO VISITED HANOI IN JANUARY , 1973 , TERMED PRG DE JURE AND DE FACTO GOVERNMENT OF PORTION OF SVN. HE RECOMMENDED THAT GOA RECOGNIZE BOTH PRG AND GVN. WHITLAM SAID THAT RECOGNITION OF PRG COULD ONLY BE ACCOMPLISHED BY WITH-LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DRAWING RECOGNITION OF GVN. CONSERVATIVE ALP DELEGATE FROM SOUTH AUSTRALIA, H.H. O'NEILL (STATE PRESIDENT OF ALP) SAID THAT GVN WOULD BREAK OFF RELATIONS WITH AUSTRALIA IF PRG WERE RECOGNIZED. WHITLAM THEN SAID THAT OBJECT NOW IS TO STOP WAR IN SVN AND TO DEAL WITH POWERS THAT BE. HE NOTED THAT AUSTRALIA COULD DEAL WITH PRG IN HANOI (WHERE EMBASSY WILL SHORTLY BE OPENED) OR IN PEKING, WITH OBJECT OF REHABILITATION OF VIET-NAM.

WHITLAM SAID HE WAS ASTONISHED THAT ISSUE OF RECOGNITION OF PRG HAD COME UP AT CONFERENCE, AS IT HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY BEEN RAISED WITHIN ALP PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS OR IN CABINET. FINALLY, WHEELDON RESOLUTION CALLING FOR RECOGNITION OF PRG AND GVN WAS REJECTED 29 TO 15. MORE HOSTILE RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY HARTLEY (SOCIALIST LEFT) CALLING FOR RECOGNITION OF PRG IN PLACE OF GVN WAS DEFEATED , 31 TO 9. CONFERENCE FINALLY APPROVED FOREIGN POLICY PLANK RECOMMENDED BY WHITLAM, 38 TO 1.

6. COMMENT : OUTCOME OF DEBATE ON RECOGNITION OF PRG REFLECTED IN PART CONTINUING AND VIGOROUS CANVASSING OF DELEGATES BY LUU TUONG QUANG, COUNSELOR OF GVN EMBASSY, WHO IS OBSERVER AT CONFERENCE. ODDLY ENOUGH, QUANG WAS CONSULTED BY SOCIALIST LEFT FIGURES, WILLIAM HARTLEY AND GEORGE CRAWFORD, ON LIKELY GVN REACTION TO AUSTRALIAN RECOGNITION OF PRG. QUANG POINTED OUT THAT GVN WOULD CONSIDER SUCH ACTION HIGHLY UNFRIENDLY ACT, POINT WHICH WAS LATER MADE ALSO BY O'NEILL OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA (SEE ABOVE). OUTCOME IS CONSIDERABLE VICTORY FOR WHITLAM AND DFA, WHICH WAS CONTINUED TO RECOMMEND AGAINST RECOGNITION OF PRG.

7. WHITLAM'S EXPRESSION OF ASTONISHMENT THAT PRG RECOGNITION BROUGHT UP WITHOUT PREVIOUS DISCUSSION IN PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS OR CABINET IS STOCK THEATRICAL GESTURE HE USES OFTEN , ON MANY ISSUES. RECOGNITION OF PRG HAS BEEN ADVOCATED BY SOCIALIST LEFT, COMMUNIST PARTIES, AND MISCELLANEOUS RADICALS OVER PAST THREE MONTHS. WOULD HAVE BEEN TRULY ASTONISHING IF ISSUE HAD NOT BEEN RAISED AT CONFERENCE.

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